

Project Resume
Shia Encyclopedia Indicana
Vol I : Introductory
Introduction and Development of Shiaism in India

Undivided India has got introduction of Shiaism as early as during the period of apparent caliphate of Hazrat Ali (as) but Shiaism reached India of today when muslims especially Sadat arriving under shadow of victories of Sultan Mahmud Ghaznavi (r 996-1030 AD) or just afterward made the land their home. Mhamud Ghaznavi is said to have his root in the royal family of Nausherawan of Persia. Thus he was relative of Shahr Bano, the mother of nine Imams though nothing can be authentically said about his Shiaism. Among those accompanying him were Alavi and Fatimi sadat also. Shiaism of those Sadat and at least a section of other muslims can't be doubtful. Mahmud Ghaznavi's brother-in-law, Salar Sahu (Daood) Ghazi and nephew, Salar Masood Ghazi have established their rule in a part of India. They were Alavi Sadat through Muhammad Hanafia. During the same period, 'Najmul Mulk' Saiyad Najmuddin of Sabzwar, Iran, patriarch of Naqavi Sadat of Jais and Naseerabad etc founded Jais and Saiyad Abdulllah 'Zarbakhsh' hailing from Jajarm and Qum, Iran founded Zaidpur. Their descendents stayed at Jais and Zaidpur respectively. Later their branches have been inhabiting in different parts of the country. Sadat's migration to India has since been continued. Among them were Neshapar's Moosvi Sadat Settled in Kintur. Some centuries later in 1320, Saiyad Sharifuddin Bulbul Shah (kazmi Saiyad) arrived in Kashmir. Budhist ruler of the area, Reanjan accepted Islam. Then in 1323 an Iranian prince arrived as a trader and proclaimed himself king as mirza Shamsuddin and founded rule of Sultan dynasty. It was during the Sultan's rule that Ameer-e-Kabeer Saiyad Ali Hamadani, author of the book al-Muwadda-tul-Qurba accompanied by some 700 Saiyads arrived in Kashmir. Thus Shiaism got substantial development in Kashmir. Settling of Shia Muslim immigrants continued during, earlier and later to the period. Their number had been significantly so much that they started pinching those muslim monarchs whose rule had been founded on Shia enmity. Firoze Shah wrote in his book of victories:- " More and more people belonging to Shia religion who are called Rafizee were given (harsh) punishment, some were given strong warning and public denouncement, their books were burnt openly. After all their evil have been wiped out totally.

Despite such state violent enmity and genocide, Shia religion and society could not see a fate of fall or disgrace. After some time, Shia state, had been established in south India. Shia religion, knowledge and learning and literature got boost under influence of these states.

Moghul rule was established in northern India but in its early stage Humayun had to face defeat by Sher Shah Suri and had to flee India. Re-establishment of his rule owed to the help of Shah Tahmasp of Persian safawi dynasty which consolidated the great moghul empire in India. It is due to the Persian help that immigration and settling here by Shia gentry, scholars, intellectuals, artisans and artists was continued. They got government posts and even access to the royal court. Majority in the Navratan (nine Jewels) of Akbar, the Great was shias. Their exalted eliteness is a golden chapter of history.

Even after it, Shias were notably visible among the governors and royal officials. Among these provinces, Awadh and Bengal had come specially under Shia governors and vice-roys which later become independent states that lasted until the British rule. It is also notable that about two third of the states/estates which came under British control were ruled by muslims while two third of the muslim states/estates were under Shia muslims. Shias held high posts even in the majority of states headed by non-shias.

It may be noted that the provincial government of Avadh had come under Shia governor viceroy during the later period of Moghul regime. The state later became independent. The first Mujtahid (Islamic Jurist) of India, Hazrat Ghufuran Maab (d. 1820), whose history making academic efforts and achievements and reformative social works on one hand gave Shia society an obvious social position and on the other hand promoted Shia knowledge and learning to unfailing development, belonged to the state. He played key role in Shia academic and intellectual development. All the Shia ulema of today in the Indian Subcontinent are indirectly his disciples.

Shia state of Avadh recorded its historical role in patronage of Shia studies and skills. This state patronage had unforgettable role in strengthening already established intellectual and academic tradition. Thus Shia academic works are much valuable. But sorry aspect of the scenario is that most of such works could not be printed and published. Its result was obvious. A dominant portion of unpublished works having been got indifference of the time had been getting lost.

So brightness of Shias on the horizon of politics and statesmanship has been obvious. Besides it, to talk about social cultural horizon, contribution of Indian Shias to about all the disciplines of Islamic studies and other sciences, technologies, arts, poetry and literature has been considerable and historical one.

No such research work has yet been taken up that could form Indian Shia Encyclopaedia. This important and great research project would be, insha Allah, initiated under patronage of Hujjatul Islam Wal Muslimeen Aqai Mahdi Mahdawipur (MZ), the Representative of Supreme Leader of Affairs of Muslimeen (Ayatullah S. Ali Khamenai (MZ).

Obviously the project is unique in its nature having a very large ambit and demands a very sincere effort, intellectual maturity longsightedness and fine analytically skill. This can not be taken by an individual or a few individuals. The project needs all the possible and organized association of almost whole community and other persons interested in Shias and Shiaism on whose basis the project will be carried out. This will be a comprehensive, meaningful and informative (illustrated) treatise that would present a historical account of development of Indian Shia society and intellectualism.

VOL II : Personalities

(Shia ulema, mujtahids, zakirs, orators, scholars, poets, literatures, researchers, scientists, artisans, artists, industrialists, rulers, noblemen, gentry etc and other notable personalities, their lives and works

VOL III : Historical account of individual and collective excellences of Indian Shias with reference to different walks of life.

Relating to Shia culture and thoughts particularly Azadari (mourning rituals), items of Azadari, Majlises, Mahfils, Muqasidas, Musalimas and Shabbedari etc.

VOL IV : Shia cultural signs and monuments-comprehensive, meaningful and informative account of thoughts and signatures of Shia religions, culture and persons

VOL V: Shia Sociology (Shia associations, organizations and institutions etc.)

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Thus there will be eighteen personnels undertaking the research work.